THE TRUE INTEREST OF THE Legal English Protestants, STATED IN A LETTER TO A PRESENT MEMBER OF THE House of Commons.

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LONDON,
Printed by *Nathaniel Thompson* at the Entrance into *Old-Spring-Garden* near *Charing-Cross*, MDCLXXXVII.

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THE TRUE INTERESTS OF THE Legal English Prohibitions.

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SIR,

IF you look round about you; you will find the greateſt part of the Nation to have been your Bloody Devouring Enemies: The viſible Reaſons, have been the Actings of the Biſhops in *Scotland*, and the High-Commiſſion Court in *England*: But the chief Reaſon of taking this pretence, was the Avarice of your Enemies to Uſurp Church-Lands: Which Intereſt (as it hath ever continued their Conſpiracys ſince) muſt always make them remain your Solemnly Leagued and unalterablerable Enemies; though perhaps your preſent Flatterers. And you have no Revertionary proſpect to comfort you; for the next Heir now living, is Invironed with *Presbyterian Inſtructers*.

But

But the preſent King, (mindful of your paſt Loyalty,) hath Promis'd and Perform'd the Protection of you, for two years together, without withdrawing ſo much as His Family-Chappel at *Whitehall* from you: And His Clemency and Compaſſion no leſs perſevers, in Protecting and Cheriſhing thoſe Contenders with Kings, the *French Hugonots*: So that His *Proteſtant Friends* can have no motive to doubt Him, whom they can only Truſt, if they Diſoblige him not.

But if the Coerſive Power muſt be continued over the *Sectaries*, though it begun all our Miſeries; and the *Penal Laws* with the *Teſts* muſt remain to drive all ſorts of *Non-conformiſts* to *Hypocriſy*; you will find that thoſe whom you would ſtill be Threatning without Power, will take new meaſures to deſtroy your future Power. I ſay not this, that I would have all ſorts of *Rebellious Sectaries* have Liberty to meet in what Numbers and Places they pleaſe; but would have new Acts (if there be not enough) to give the Civil Magiſtrate a ſufficient preventing Power of ſuch Temptations to Rebellion. But I would have the *Proteſtant Church* freed from the blemiſh of being Tyrants over Mens Souls; their Churches, Revenues, and ſuch a Paſtoral Power as Chriſt and his Apoſtles Exercis'd, being continued upon them. I mean a Power to Preach, Teach and Excommunicate all Church Diſturbers.

And now ſince the *Teſt* Acts have made a great noiſe in the World; I ſhall preſume to offer ſome Proofs out of an Allowed *Proteſtant Bible* of the Unlawfulneſs of them.

And to begin with the Act of the 25*th*. of King *Charles* the Second, the words of the Engagement are theſe.

I A. B. do declare, that I do Believe that there is not any Tranſubſtantiation in the Lords-Supper, or in the Elements of Bread and Wine, at, or after the Conſecration thereof, by any perſon whatſoever.

And in the ſecond Act of the 30*th*. of King *Charles* the Second, there is added, The renouncing the Invocation of the Virgin Mary, or any of the Saints, as Idolatrous; as alſo the Maſs as it is now uſed by the Church of Rome, is declar'd Idolatrous.

not made

But

But the *Proteſtant Bible* is poſitive in theſe Words, St. *Matthew* Chap. 26. ver. 26.

And as they were Eating, Jeſus took Bread, and Bleſſed it, and Brake it, and gave it to the Diſciples, and ſaid, Take, Eat, this is my Body.

And in St. *Mark* Chap. 14. ver. 22.

And as they did Eat, Jeſus took Bread, and Bleſſed it, and Brake it, and gave it to them, and ſaid, Take, Eat, this is my Body.

And in St. *Luke* Chap. 22. ver. 19.

And he took Bread, and gave Thanks, and Brake it, and gave unto them, ſaying, This is my Body which is given for you, this do in Remembrance of me.

And in the Verſes immediately following theſe three Texts, Chriſt calls the Cup of Wine, *His Blood, ſhed for his Followers*: But I omitted them for Brevity ſake.

Now I would ask you, whether the plain Words in the *Teſt* Acts, are not expreſly that I believe not one of theſe Texts of Chriſt?

And to give you yet a plainer Text out of St. *John* Chap. 6. ver. 51. You will find theſe words in your own *Bible*.

I am the Living Bread, which came down from Heaven, if any Man Eat this Bread he ſhall live for ever.

And the Bread that I will give is my Fleſh, which I will give for the Life of the World.

Conſider now *Sir*, Whether the Ingagements in theſe *Teſt* Acts, are not a Solemn League againſt the Word of God, ſo plain in four Texts; and a confounding Snare to thoſe that cannot Read and Underſtand, as well as to thoſe that can; for they Ingage to they know not what: Nor do I know one contrary Text.

As for the Miracle of *Tranſubſtantiation*, which the *Teſt-takers* think ſo hard, God hath Impower'd Man and Beaſt to demonmonſtrate it daily to them: For the chief ſorts of Beaſts do daily Tranſ-

but grass & water do not remain - a visible Contradiction - Oth(4) Genes -

Transubstantiate Grass and Water into their own Flesh and Blood; And Man does Transubstantiate the very Elements of Bread and Wine into his own Flesh and Blood: This undenyable Truth then should induce the *Test League* to allow God a little more Power: And since he shews them the multiplication of all growing Bodies in their Seed, they cannot deny him a Fertile Power over his own Body: For since the Holy Ghost Breathed Christs Body into the Womb of a Virgin, Christ being God and Man, cannot be denyed the same Power to Breath the Breath of Life into Bread, by his own or his Delegates Words. And for Flesh to lye hid under the outward Figure of Bread, is no more impossible, then for the hidden Flesh of all Birds with their entire Forms, to be conceal'd under the Shape, Taste and Complexion of Eggs. We must then believe God of such Infinite Power, as to Create all things out of nothing by his Word; which is the greatest and most visible of all Miracles: For (besides the proofs in *Genesis*) we daily view the Universe, which could never make it self in such Beauty and Order, without an Infinitely Powerful Designer.

And that Christ did Delegate his Power in the Sacrament to his Disciples, is plain in the Text above-mention'd of St. *Luke* Chap. 22. ver. 9. *This do in remembrance of me.*

If then we have so many Texts for *Transubstantiation*, and none against it: And the second Councel of *Nice* with others, declaring for it, and none against it: These are not Authorities to be oppos'd by an Antient Father or too, or a little late grown Reformed Church or two.

For the opposers of Gods Word condemn their own Principle of Reformation; and Contradictors of General Councels, are underminers of all Christian Authority or Unity; for they are the chosen Representatives of the Generality of Christians. Amongst whom, Peaceablely call'd by the chief Power for many hundreds of years, the Church of God must be: To which Christ Promis'd to continue with, St. *Matthew* Chap. 28. ver. 20. in these words, *Loe I am with you always, even unto the end of the World.* And if so, all Peaceable General Councels must be of like Authority: And they who will not hear them, must incur the Penalty denounced in St. *Matthew* Chap. 18. ver. 17, 18. *And if he neglect to hear thee, tell it unto the Church; and if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man and a Publican.*

Verse

Verse 18. *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven. And whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.*

And the Church that we must hear, must be always Visible (if Christ be always with them) or else it can neither command, nor we hear them to Obey.

And without an Umpire Church we can never agree about the Sacrament; nor any other of the many Controverted Texts, and *Sects* growing from them.

And now I believe this may be enough, though you still doubt *Transubstantiation*, to make you think it your Duty to endeavour to Repeal these *Test* Acts; to remove such a Bait for Division between His Majesty and People.

As for the *Declaration* in the second *Test* Act, Of Idolatry for Invoking the Virgin Mary or Saints, or Adoring Christ in the Elevated Bread of the Mass. Where they suppose he is not: I shall, in brief, only say, That the seeking of Christ either by or without his mediating Favourites, though it should be, where he is suppos'd not to be,) can be no *Idolatry*. Since Christ is every where, as he is God; and that no *Pagan* Gods are in the Hearts of any *Christians*.

And now having prov'd the unlawfulness, I shall proceed to the Inconveniencies of the *Test* Acts.

And what can be more improper, then depriving the Government, not only of the use of the *Roman Catholicks* in all Chargeable, Troublesom, or Dangerous Offices, either Civil or Military; but even of all other Subjects, who may avoid such Imployments, by saying, I cannot take the Ingagements in the *Test* Acts, and therefore must not obey you.

How ridiculous were any Government, that should not have a Power to suspend such Laws?

As for the *Penal Laws* against *Non-conformists*, they were made to wear out the Opposers of Queen *Elizabeths* Title to the Crown; but that Cause being remov'd long since, it is certain that they have been contrary to the Primitive Doctrine and Practice

Practice of *Christians*, Oppressive of mens Consciences and Families, the Causers of Conspiracies and Rebellions, and drivers of men to *Hypocrisy*.

If these then are their undenyable Attributes, your Compassion, Justice and true *Protestant* Interest, will Ingage you to endeavour when you Sit again, to get the start of all your Enemies, in obliging His most Illustrious Majesty, by taking off altogether the worst of Slaveries, at least from the most Loyal of His Oppressed Subjects.

They are but a Contemptible Handful of People. And therefore when God shall remove His glorious Majesty; if you shall then find them worse then other Subjects, you will be numerous enough to make what new Laws you please against them: For they are not the twentieth man, and have grown no faster here in this short time of Liberty, than a great Body of them hath done amongst the Wise United *Netherlanders* with a hundred years Liberty; where they are in Peace, with a continued Fidelity to their Government, when Invaded by the *French* of their own Religion.

But let what will happen, it is the True Interest of the *Church of England* to stand or fall with its Duty: Their King (if he were a *Heathen*) is the Lords Anointed; as *Cyrus* was call'd in *Isaia* chap. 45. v. 1. and he is the Legal Head of the *English Church*, by which he can model them to their Duty without force.

And now I have said enough, to one so Wise as to know, that God and the King must be Trusted with something. For I should Apologize for so tedious a Letter from

Your very Affectionate and

most Humble Servant.

FINIS.

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